¶ The complaynt of the soule,

BODLEIANA BIBLIOTHECA

Here begynneth a lamentable complaynte that ꝑ soule maketh of the wretched lyfe of the body.

Tedet animam meam vite mee. My soule is wery of the lyfe. For there I se no thynge but mater of sorowe/mysery & synne. The parte of my lyfe passed is full lamẽtable whan I remembre it/the present parte suppressed myne herte with heuynesse/for it is vnreformed. And the great losse of vertue in these two partes and abhomynacyon of synne putteth me in great fere of ꝑ thyrde parte the whiche is to come. And yf my lyfe myght be prolonged many yeres onely in vertuous vses/yet it might not recompence for the manyfolde offences Whiche I haue done in the present syght of my lorde god and terrybie Iudge of my lyfe Whiche hateth nothynge but onely synne. Alas than my soule may be full of sorowe Whiche hath yrouoked my lorde god/my mooste tender louer to be wroth with me and to hate me more than I do a dogge or a stynkynge carayne/for nothynge is so vyle/so lothesome/so stynkynge/nor so abhomynable in the syght or smellynge of man/as synne is in the syght or smellyng of god. Alas alas that I sholde offende my lorde god Whiche hath made me of nought/& where he myght haue made me a stone or an vnreasonable beest/he hathe made me to the ymage of hymselfe a reasonable creature/and whan I was lost/redemed me with ꝑ precyous blode of his herte/and suffred the mooste bytterst dethe for me/and in all my lyfe he hath shewed greate kyndenesse vnto me/and I haue shewed greate vnkyndenesse agayne to hym/he loued me & I not hym/for I wyll not do after the wyll of hym/but I sette my wyll afore his wyll/& the pleasure

of myselfe afore the pleasure of hym/ and in fulfyllynge my Wyll I care not to displease hym. And thus I se not by hym which hath made so moche of me/ he hath made heuen and erthe for me/ and hath comen to this erthe to teche me the waye of saluacyon/ & hath ordeyned for me yf I Wolde loue hym the inestymable Joye of his diuynyte/ and to receyue the eternall kyngedome of felycyte. ¶ All these thynges I forgette/ and ordre myselfe by my lewde neglygence and vnhappy lyuynge to lese the loue of my lorde god/ and ỹ transcendynge Joye of his kyngedome. I ordre me by my Wretched lyfe to euerlastynge payne/ Woo may I be a vessell of deth/ of Ire and indygnacyon of god/ he hath made my soule by the sacrament of baptysme a vessel of mercy and grace/ and I haue defouled it With abhomynable synne/ & made it Without his inmeasurable mercy a vessell of dampnacyon to be brente in the fyre of hell amonge the horryble fendes euer Without endynge. ¶ Alas What shall I do/ What shall I saye Whiche haue erred thus ferre out of ỹ Waye of vertue/ and am caste depe in to the pytte of synne. A greate cause I haue of lamentacyon Whiche am in this greate Jeoperdye of endlesse dampnacyon. I am a Waster and a destroyer of my soule and body. I destroye the goodes of nature/ of grace/ and of the worlde as a man ỹ is Worse than good in the syght of hym the Whiche hath gyuen them to me/ to the entente that I sholde vse them vertuously. And in the syght of hym Whiche shall moost bytterly punysshe me/ I vse them vycyously/ I am closed in the derke cloudes of Ignorraunce and reprouable neclygence of my lorde god/ of myselfe and of vertuouse lyuynge. All my lyfe is synfull/ & as a drye tree barayne and ferre from all fruyte of vertue/ I thynke not on the

dredefull Judgement of god/where I shall stande afore the terryble Judgement of Christ/and to rendre accompte for all the dedes that I haue done in my soule and in my body. O there I shall shewe an vnfruytfull lyfe/and yf there be ony fruyte therin/it is but fayned and false/or vnprofytable/or corrupted/and eyther it ful lytel pleaseth/or elles vtterly displeaseth god. And not withstandynge that euery man there shal be fedde after this lyfe with suche fruyte as he hath brought forth in this lyfe/than my fedynge is lyke to be full bytter vnto me. ¶O how sorowfull I ought than to be/for except ꝑ I sorowe for my synne in this lyfe/I am lyke for to be brought to greate sorow after this lyfe. ¶O my synful soule. O my myserable soule loke vpon thy selfe/se howe thou arte brought in to the greate darkenesse of synne/so depe that thou canste not se thy selfe. Seest thou not howe ꝑ rennest in to vayne thoughtes & vnlefull delyres. ¶Remembre that all the tyme ꝑ thou lokest not vpon vertue is lost and thou shalte be shent therfore/as moche tyme ꝑ leselt than whiche myght tourne the to great Joy in tyme commynge/and now all shall tourne the to greate punysshement/except thou lerne to amende and spende wel the residue of thy tyme. O how aferde thou sholdest be to haue an vnfruytfull lyfe/for the vnfruytful lyfe is a dampnable lyfe/as almyghty god whiche is very trewth sayth. Euery tree whiche bryngeth not forth good fruyte/it shal be cutte downe & caste in to the fyre. ¶A mercy god what shall I do than/for I am so barayne & so drye from al deuocyon and moysture of contrycyon and grace/that I am apte and redye to the fyre. ¶A mercyfull lorde cutte me not downe by deth to suche tyme that my tree may haue moysture through thy grace/and brynge forth

some profytable fruytes of penaunce/all my dedes that I do are not suffycyent to recompence for ẏ meate and drynke ẏ I receyue of ẏ to my bodyly sustenaunce. ¶ A where with shal I than recompence for my soule/my body/my wytte/my herynge/my seynge/my speche/my helth/my bodyly power/my lyfe/and where wͭ all shall I recompence for my synne/ꝛ for ẏ losse of grace whiche passeth these all/for none shall be brought to dampnacyon but suche as for lacke of grace are defouled wͭ synne who so spendeth more in fedẽge of a beest than it is worth in themselfe/is not that superfluous expence and vnproufytable. And yet mercyfull lorde ẏ nourysshest dayly and haboundauntly an vnprofytable worme ꝛ stynkynge synner. ¶ A good lorde thou woldest not that this wretche shall perysshe/of whome thou doost so large expences/and so tenderly kepest it. Many good thou gyuest it vnasked/and from many euyll thynges he preserueth it vnthanked of it/thou kepest me/ẏ ledest me/and protectest me from many perylles/and as an vnkynde wretche I remembre not this/and I do not cal in welthe to the but in greate sorowe ꝛ fere whan than that I am lyke to falle. ¶ A good lorde a more or a greatter wretche is there none in this worlde than I am/and a more vnkynde kaytyfe/a wretche/a worme/a vessell ful of vnclennesse and abhomynacyon/not worthy for to be called a man or a reasonable creature. For I abuse that reason/that memorye/and that fredome of wyll whiche thou haste gyuen vnto me with all the gyftes ꝛ all the benefytes of nature and of fortune/and so I am wors than a beest the whiche hath not the helpes/and haue no reason for to dyrecte theyr lyfe to the honoure and the worshyppe of god as I haue/they haue no fredome of wyll

for to chose the good & to leue ꝑ euyll as I haue. My reason is gyuen to me for to knowe my lorde god / and for to knowe howe I sholde lyue to the pleasure of hym / and to thynke vpon the lyfe that is to come / & holyly for to ordre myselfe therto / and for to auoyde the greate tourmentes and the endlesse trybulacyon the whiche after this lyfe is ordeyned for synne. ¶ A god mercy What greate derkenesse am I in / and my soule is in maner made blynde the goostely syghte is gone. I loke not vp to my lorde god with the syght of my soule / but all my thought / all my memorye / all my loue / and all the greate pleasure in my soule is downewarde / and all is to vanytees of this erth / I am erthly in my prayers / in my studye / in my labours in my medytacyons / and in all my conuersacyon. I may well thynke that these wordes are veryfyed of me. The prophete ysaye sayth. Erthe erthe erthe / heare the worde of god / for I am made of erthe / and hastely I shal tourne to erthe / and all my conuersacyon is but erthe. I am reputed good lorde in the syght of the after my soule / yf I loue erthe I am erthe / yf I loue erthly thynges I am erthly / yf I loue goostly thynges I am goostly / and yf I loue the good lorde whiche arte very god / than I am godly. ¶ A good lorde I fere than that I am in thy reputacyon but as vyle erthe. For in the erthe and in the erthly thynges is euer my mynde. I kepe it not vpon ꝑ good lorde / ne vpon the holy orderynge of my soule / I haue suffred my selfe by wretched custome so longe and so contynually for to renne from ꝑ and from actual thoughtes of my soule and thynges whiche are prouffytable for to promote my soule in vertue and in good werkes. Than nowe I can not without greate payne and without greate laboure for to fyxe my mynde ony tyme

or space vpon the or vpon the holy dyreccyon and orde-
rynge of my soule/and I of a frowarde and of an obdu-
rate wyll in wretchednes enforceth not neyther care not
myselfe for to take parte agaynst this myserable incly-
nacyon of my selfe/and so it goeth all downewarde with
me. I come not vpwarde to the/neyther I wyl not great-
ly applye myselfe for to come to the by actuall medyta-
cyon and by parfyte loue of ẏ/I slepe/I dreme/and that
I shall fynde whan the sharpe paynes of dethe shall co-
me for to open the eye of my soule/for than I shall clere-
ly se howe vaynely and how synfully and how wretched-
ly and how vnhappy and howe myserably and howe vn-
gracyously that I haue myspended the tyme of this ly-
fe/the whiche tyme is gyuen vnto me onely bycause that
I sholde spende it fruytfully in good and in vertuouse ly-
uynge/vnto the greate honoure and to ẏ greate worshyp
of our sauyoure Chryst Jesu/and vnto the promocyon of
my soule in the glorye of eternall lyfe and of the heuenly
felycyte/and also for to auoyde eternall dampnacyon
whiche is ordeyned by ẏ ryghtwysnes of almyghty god
to the inordynate lyuers of this lyfe/the whiche consu-
me the goodes that they haue receyued of god to theyr
eternall reprofe/sorowe and payne/and for to receyue of
almyghty god perpetuall dampnacyon.

Tedet animam meam vite mee. ¶ I am wery of
my lyfe. It is so full of ignoraunce and of neclyg-
gence/so full of vnhappy desyres and of synfull wordes/
so ful of forgetfulnesse/and so full of euyl thoughtes/and
so full of vnfruytfull dedes and werkes/and so ful of vn-
prouffytable heuynesse/and so ful of vnlawfull sadnesse/
and so full of vayne Joyes and synfull delectacyons

With foule wretched and myserable pleasures / also it is full of paynes With vnpacyence of proude desyres / and With a full couetous mynde / and w all these myseryes I se how ỹ myselfe is but a course and a rennynge to dethe / and now I am more nerer it than Whan as I laste spake of it. The deth commeth shortely / and the lyfe gooth away full fastely and full swyftely / & at the houre of deth I am lyke to be called for to rendre accomptes of my lyfe / and I am vnprouyded and vnware for to content the Judge of my lyfe / and than I shall be moost full of sorowe and payne / & lamente or complayne ỹ tyme that euer I came in to this lyfe / Whiche so neclygently hath loste the profyte of this. A good lord I am ashamed & abasshed of my lyfe in the syght of the good lorde whiche all thynge seest clerely / and nothyng may be hydde from the. ¶ Sythen it is so that shame is feere of rebuke and reproue / and there is no rebuke whiche that I drede so moche as I do the rebuke of the good lorde / wherfore I am moost ashamed of my synfull lyfe in the syght of the / and thus I am ashamed to lyue / and yet I am aferde to dye. For yf I may auoyde by the great mercy of god the turmentes of eternall dampnacyon / yet I fere ỹ I shall here w me in purgatory the gylte of many synnes / and I shall paye by greate payne the dutye of many oblygacyons / graunt me good lorde perfyte fere of ỹ. For Whan I shall not fere by deth to come to the / for thy fere maketh soules to declyne and flee from synne. ¶ A good lorde yf I had thy fere perfytly I sholde be more adredde ony thynge to thynke or to desyre synfully in the syghte of the / than I am to do synne in the syght of man. The synfull mocyons of my mynde are so abhomynable in the beholdynge of the as they dyd of shamefull synne in

the syght of man that yf I fered the I sholde be punys-
shed and ashamed to thynke ony thynge dysplealynge
to the. I Wante the fere of the/and Why/for I haue not
parfyte fayth of the. A thā I am vnfaythfull/and with
out fayth no man maye please the/and thus all my lyfe
is dysplealynge vnto the. ¶ A good lorde What shall I
do for I Want fayth of the/fere of the/loue of the/& dre-
de of the/but I Want not the dred of the Worlde/loue
of the Worlde/and shame of the Worlde. And thus the
ymage of my soule is defouled & made foule i thy syght
and is depryued thy great vertue/Whereby it sholde be
made fayre and acceptable to the/What shall I do than
but turne me to the & aske mercy/for that I haue spen-
ded my lyfe so myserably. A than I may calle my soule
a synfull soule Whiche is without dred of the and Wout
shame of synne/vnderstandynge that after the ordre of
thy ryghtwysnesse synne muste haue sorowe/than my
soule ought to haue sorowe/and al my lyfe sholde be We-
pynge. & Who shall gyue teres ynoughe to myne eyen ȳ
I may Wepe ynough for my myserable lyuynge/and
lamente that I euer haue spent so myserably my tyme
which I can not now reuoke agayne/ne fruytfully recō-
pence but by sorowe for my synne. ¶ Alas I haue loste
the Well of lyfe and of all true solace/and I haue delued
in the olde stynkyng cysterne of synne/and the decey ua-
ble Water therof/Whiche semeth in ȳ begēnynge swete
and delectable/& now it is tourned in to bytternesse/ab-
hominacyon/and greate sorowe. ¶ O mooste mercyfull
lorde Whiche arte the Well of pyte & of grace from Who-
me the flode of celestyall glorye dothe streme vpon all
the heuenly courte. Replenysshynge them With al plea-
sure & delectacyons/passynge ȳ possybylyte of mannes

thynkynge/gyue me good lorde in this vale of mysery
for the glorye of thy name the spyryte of compunccyon
that I may bytterly wepe for my synnes and to be pre-
uylegyate by thy grace neuer from hens forward dāp-
nably to offend the. ¶ O merueylous god how myser-
ble is my soule/ whiche only can not sorowe accordyn-
ge to the greuous offences that it hathe done in this ly-
fe/ but also it is in maner benōmen and deed/ for it feleth
not ỹ great goostly sorowes that it hath/ wherby excep-
te it haue helpe by meane of penaunce it shal be brought
to the bytter paynes of euerlastynge deth. ¶ I maye
curse synne the whiche hath brought me so ferre from
the good lorde/ and so ferre fro myselfe that I haue loste
my felynge ỹ quyckenesse of my spyryte/ & the goostely
taste of all spyrytuall pleasure and delectacyons in ver-
tue. ¶ A myserable soule/ a synful soule/ why arte thou
so dulle & so slowe to all good werkes whiche are to the
pleasure of god/ and to thy perpetuall promocyon and
endlesse Joye/ perpetuall blysse and hertely gladnesse/
Why arte thou so prompte and so redy to all wretched-
nesse & all werkes of abhomynable synnes/ whiche are
to ỹ great displeasure of almighty god/ and to thy grea-
te payne and sorowe and dampnacyon/ bothe of soule &
of body. Why arte thou so oblyuyous and forgetfull of
fruytfull & vertuous doctryne/ and so retentyfe of cuyll
spekynge and wordes inclytynge to synne. Woo woo
mayst thou be whiche leuest the waye of vertue & cho-
sest the waye of vyces/ leuest the waye of saluacyon/ &
takest the waye of dampnacyon. Thou hast lyfe and
deth bothe layde before ỹ/ and whiche thou wylte thou
mayst chose. Louest thou not lyfe/ hatest thou not deth/
louest thou not delectacyō and pleasure/ hatest not thou

payne and sorowe. Alas how vnhappy arte ẏ than whi-
che chosest the waye of synne/the waye of deth/ẏ way
of payne & endelesse sorowe/and wylfully leuest ẏ waye
of vertue whiche ledeth to lyfe/Joy and endlesse myrth
with al ẏ herte can thynke or desyre consolacyon. Thou
rennest to bodyly deth/& not onely bodyly wherby thy
soule shall be departed from thy body/but also ẏ goostly
syght of dethe where ẏ shalte be for euer departed from
the face and clere vysyon of god whiche is ẏ lyfe to thy
soule lyke as thy soule is lyfe to thy body/the paynes of
fyre and the terryble syght of the deuylles shal not be so
greuous vnto the/as the sondrynge from thy lorde god
whiche full sure thou shalte se hym in his glorye/wold
not thou saye that suche a man were worthy sorowe &
payne whiche wold chose to go that way were it neuer
so pleasaunt there he knewe certaynly/yf he contynued
therin that he shall be taken with theues robbed & put
to the moost bytterest payne of deth. Than I counseyll
the by tymes leue the waye of synne/for the ende therof
is endlesse sorow/and the pleasure ẏ cometh therof be it
neuer so greate it shall hastely passe. And yf thou come
to that ende thou shalte take thy leue as true as god is
true from all pleasures without ende. Our lorde of his
greate mercy offred to the eternall pleasure for a shorte
temporall payne suffred accordynge to the ordynaũce of
his wyll/yf ẏ wylt refuse so greate a lucre for so lytell a
payment/than ẏ arte an vnhappy marchaunt. Thã yf
thou wylt not folowe ẏ wyll of god in suffrynge of this
payne/but wyll fulfyll thyne owne wyl in takynge thy
shorte & synfull pleasures of this lyfe/arte not thou thã
worthy/by ẏ ryghtwysenes of god to lose and be depry-
ued of this perpetuall ioye & pleasure/ẏ canst not reaso-

nably saye nay. For thou that wylte refuse so inestymable a Joye for so lytell a pryce / than ꝑ settest lytell therby / & that thou dysablest thy selfe to haue it. ¶ And of very equyte thou whiche wylfully & synfully forsakest eternall saluacyon / thou deseruest by the ryghtwysnesse of god to haue eternall payne and dampnacyon. Than beholde vpon the right syde the mercy of god Whiche is redy to gyue the perpetuall Joye for a shorte vertuous payne. And beholde vpon the lyfte hande the ryghtwysnesse of god Whiche shall gyue the eternall payne for refusynge of eternal Joye which thou forsokest for a shorte synfull pleasure / than beware What ꝑ doost / he of his great grace offereth the perpetuall Joye. And yf ꝑ wylt so lyghtly refuse it / than he threteth the With endelesse sorowe and payne that thou mayste not escape his handes / chose ꝑ now Whether ꝑ Wylte for a lytell payne haue endelesse pleasure / or for a lytel symple solace haue endelesse payne and sorowe / and one thou must nedes chose. I counseyll the to take payne and leue pleasure / drawe the to the ryght hande / that thou be not founde at the daye of dome amonge the damned people vpon the lyfte hande / leue vayne and synfull temporall Joye / for the ende therof is sorowe / yf ꝑ lyuest after thy pleasaunt desyres of thy flesshe / it shall bryng the to endelesse and paynfull dethe / yf thy flesshe lyue after thy soule / and thy soule after god / than thou shalte lyue eternally. ¶ A my sycke vnstable soule / dulle soule / mysserable & synful soule / ꝑ Wolde haue helth / strength / loue / & power / thou Wold be moche made of / & haue rychesse / fredom & frendshyp / ꝑ Wolde be Wout fere Wout heuynesse / ꝑ Wolde be swyfte / lyght / impassyble / Why sekest ꝑ the goddes in ꝑ regyon of deth / they are not here / they are onely there

Where is very lyfe/and no lyfe maye be called very lyfe but onely that lyfe Whiche is eternall lyfe/for there deth hath no power ony thynge to mynyſſhe thy lyfe or ony thynge ꝑ apperteyneth to ꝑ lyfe/for from that lyfe deth is perpetually exyled Whiche maketh this lyfe no lyfe/ and all thynge to vanyſſhe awaye whiche perteyneth to this lyfe. ¶ A my ſoule loue that lyfe and ꝑ lorde aboue all thynge Whiche ſhall gyue ꝑ that Joyfull lyfe ꝑ bleſſed lyfe perdurable and eternal lyuyng/what haſt thou in this mortal lyfe but laboure/Werynelle/ſorowe and payne/w̄ theſe ꝑ begynneſt thy lyfe/w̄ theſe ꝑ contynueſt thy lyfe/with theſe thou ſhalt ende thy lyfe/ꝑ pleaſures are ſhortly paſſynge/the ſorowes and paynes are longe abydynge/and all erthly Joyes are medled With myſſerye of ſynne/thou thynkeſt ſynne is but lytell/Wolde god thou Woldeſt call it to mynde how gracyous it is in the ſyght of ꝑ great Judge of the world almyghty god/ remembre how greuouſly he hath punyſſhed ſynne/ great parte of ꝑ aungelles he caſt out of heuen for ſynne Whiche are of all creatures mooſt excellent in naturall perfeccyon. ¶ O how ſhalte thou thynke than ꝑ he ſhal ſpare the Whiche arte ſynfull/for thou arte nothynge ſo pꝛeeyous in nature as ꝑ leeſt aungell Whiche Was loſte and dampned for ſynne/& thy body is but a doungh̄ylle and a ſacke of ſtynkynge fylth/than truſte ꝑ that yf ꝑ Wylt not leue ſynne/thou ſhalt perylſhe With them/for the ryghtwyſnelle of god Wyll punyſſhe ſynne/& ryght they ſhall perylſhe from ꝑ perpetuall pleaſure & glorye of god Whiche Wyll not leue ſynne/all We are exyled frō paradyſe for ſynne/all the Worlde Was drowned excepte. viij. perſones in ꝑ tyme of Noes floode for ſynne/ the fyue cytees of Whiche one Was Sodome & Gomore

were destroyed with fyre and brymstone & sanke downe for synne/the Egyptyans were drowned in the reed see for synne/ỹ childzen of Israel were kylled a great nombre in deserte for synne/& now all the. xij. trybes are in captyuite for synne/translacyons of kyngdomes & Empyres fro man to man is for synne/batayles/pestylence/& hungre/incomynge plages of god contynually in some parte of the World or vpon the people is for synne/ and fynally all desyre of synne shall cease from all pleasure/and tourne to vnremedyable paynes/and synners shall be put with synners in euerlastynge woo there as they shal neuer tourne to Joye or pleasure agayne. ¶ Wretched soule why sorowest not thou for synne/serst thou not how my lorde loueth ỹ and hateth synne/whiche wolde suffre the moost paynfull deth to delyuer the from synne/lerne to loue thy louer/but ỹ hatest thy louer/for whan thou doest synne/thou doest playnely ỹ is in ỹ to make hym to suffre deth agayne/ỹ louest synne whiche is ỹ moost greatest ennemy for it shall brynge ỹ except thou leue it to endlesse & horyble payne/thou settest lytell by synne/a wolde god our lorde myght set so lytell there by/for than ỹ sholde be delyuered from greate fere/heuynesse & payne whiche ỹ hast deserued for synne but wo sholde I be good lorde for euery transgressyon of thy commaundement/for yf there come none other than dysobedyence/it dyshonoureth the/a how sholde I say ỹ synne is lytel/for I can not truly say ỹ ỹ dyshonour of ỹ is lytell/a how I am boũde to honour ỹ/ỹ desyrest it not for all ỹ ỹ hast done to me/but I sholde do honour to ỹ. I receyue thy benefytes/& ỹ mayst nothyng receyue of me but honour/ỹ gyuest my goodnesse & this may growe. I may gyue to the no goodnes wherby ỹ mayst

be the better/for my goodnesse may not growe. I maye
gyue to ỹ honour/& this may not growe in ỹ but in me/
and whã thyne honoure groweth in me thã is thy good
nesse in me/& all ỹ profytes of my dedes in to me/& none
to ỹ for I may by dedes nothĩg make ỹ to be better/but
I may make me ỹ better by thy grace in ỹ I do honour
to ỹ. A dere lorde how wo shold I than be to dyshonour
the/& I may do no more dyshonour to ỹ than to do synne
Whiche can not be done in mynde/in wyll/ne dede but in
the clere syght of the/a how woo sholde I than be to do
synne & therby for to dyshonour ỹ whiche arte my lorde
and my god/my maker & my redemer & preseruer/and
fyually wolde bryng me to se thy glorye/& to haue w the
honour in eternyte. A how shall I saye ỹ synne is lytell
sythen ỹ synne dyshonoureth ỹ/& nothynge shold be mo
re shamefull & sorowfull in me than for to do ony dede to
dyshonoure the. Alas how maye I fynde in my herte to
dyshonour the whiche haue none helpe but onely of the.
O wretched & myserable soule why remembrest thou
not ỹ trewth of god/for thou knowest it well ỹ it is im=
possyble ỹ he sholde make ony lye/& thou knowest well
that he promysed nothynge but that it shall be fulfylled
for his power is so greate that nothynge may lette hym
Than thou knowest veryly that thou shalte appere a=
fore hym and acompte all thy lyfe/and of all that thou
haste receyued of hym/what sayest thou arte thou redy
to thy rekenynge/canst thou shewe that thou hast well
expended and well vsed all the goodes that thou haste
receyued of god/haste not thou vaynly loste and vayn=
ly suffred for to be lost many of these gyftes of our lorde
god/and many thou haste expended that thou haste no

reason for to laye comforte ꝯ at thyne accompte but that thou arte worthy to be dampned for thē. ¶ Alas sythen thou canste not gyue a good rekenynge of thy tyme expended/Why Wylte not ꝯ amende the/& by ꝯ Well spendynge of thy lyfe to come for to procure the fauoure of this ryghtwyse Judge/he is redy of his ryght greate mercy to take one day well spended for a yere. ¶ O than sythen he is thus kynde to ꝯ/& ꝯ Wylte contynue in vnkyndnesse to hym/this synne of vnkyndnesse & ingratytude/yf ꝯ hast none other synne it is ynough to procure the Ire or wrathe of this Judge/why wylte ꝯ than vnkynde soule dayly multyply newe offences/why remēbrest not ꝯ the great Jeopardy ꝯ ꝯ standest in for thyne olde synne. ¶ O wretche lerne to wepe aptly and to take wylfull sorowe/a greate cause hast ꝯ to wepe & sorowe/for yf ꝯ might wepe as moche water as is in the see/yet it were not of thyselfe suffycyent to wasshe thy soule frō synne/thou doost as a malefactour Whiche hathe offended his prynce/& is sory for to be taken & to suffre greate payne/& yet wylfully he wyll moze outragyously offende hym/knowynge Well that he shall suffre therfore the moze payne/ꝯ sayest to me that this prynce is mercyful Jsaye to the that he is mercyful to none but to suche as haue mercy vpon them selfe & Wyll leue theyr wretched lyuynge/than haue mercy vpon thy selfe & leue the mysery e of synne/for thou shalte be called sooner than thou trustest to thy acompte of all thy werkes/of al thy ydelnes/of all thy wordes/of all thy sylence/of all thy sleppynge/of al thy wakynge/of al thy syckenesse/of all thy helthe/of all thy rychesse/of all thy pouerte/of al thy fedynge/of all abstynences/and of all thynge that thou haste done and lefte vndone/to the leest thought of thy soule/

and of all thynge perteynynge to thy power whiche thou hast not ordeyned to the wyl of god and saluacyon of thy soule/and thy body shall be punysshed with the/for it synned with the/and thou in it for the cause of synne is in it/and it shall haue no payne but for the/for it myght not synne but by the. Alas why wylte not thou se whether thou goest and beholde the ende of thy passage that thou demest that thou goest to pleasure/and as a blyndfull man thou goest euen contrary towarde payne/ ẏ thynkest ẏ goest for to haue thy wyll/and thou goest there thou shalte haue all thynge contrarye to thy wyll/and thou desyrest myrth & thou takest the waye of endles laboure and perpetuall payne and euerlastynge dampnacyon.

Tedet animam meam vite mee. ¶ A my soule hath a great cause to be wery of my lyfe/for I lyue not as the louer of god sholde lyue/but as a wretched caytyfe whiche forgeteth god/ & deserueth to be forgoten of hym. ¶ I haue no mynde vpon my saluacyon/my mynde is rather vpon thynge of dampnacyon. I endeuer me not to go frō my wyll. I labour not to represse ẏ wretched mocyō whiche I fele in me. I suffre my mynde at large to renne in vanytees/as a creature ẏ hath no god or Judge/ne thyng to answere for/no thynge to sorow for ne to fere/for helpe is offred to me and I wyll not aske it/it is offred to me and I wyll not put my hande therto/myne ennemyes and myne accusers I consente to/and to my lorde and my louer I wyll not consente. A good lorde what shall I do at the dredefull daye of dethe at the terryble dome in the day of Judgement. ¶ A how many thousande synnes shall come than vpon me without ony prouy-

lyon as they laye in watche to take me whiche I se not now/ & I toke no kepe to delyuer myselfe by playne confessyon/and many a thyng whiche I trust now is no synne shall than appere greuous synne/and many a dede whiche I trust nowe is good/than I shall fynde them euyll and blacke and abhompnable they that shall appere to me/there I shall receyue in soule and body moche woo as I haue done in soule and body moche wretchednesse/and than shall I be woo for I shall receyue the wofull and sorowful endlesse payne whan the tyme shall be passed/except I leue nowe synne/and torne me to god and deserue by vertuous lyuynge to haue mercy/there shall be payne vnprofytable and vnfruytfull penaunce/for that payne shall not remeue ỳ synne of them whiche in this lyfe wolde not take wylfull payne to be delyuered from synne/and able to be dampned from grace that shall haue no power to recompence and satysfye for theyr offences/for whan grace was offred to them they refused it/and whan the tyme of penaũce was layd afore them/vnfruytfully and neclygẽtly they passed it. ¶O good lorde nowe I ought for to remembre what I haue done/and what that I haue deserued to receyue for my doynge/all my yeres I sholde recorde in ỳ bytternesse of my soule/and say how my tyme is consumed without profyte/and what woo I haue wrought to myselfe/yf I coude remẽbre ỳ I had done many good thynges than I sholde be gladde/but I remembre that I haue done many wretched and euyll thynges and fewe good/and therfore I haue greate cause to be woo/and yf I wyll not applye me to be woo where I shall be woo there I shall neuer departe therof. ¶I

Woo woo be to this greate hardenesse of myne herte/ for these greate harmes of remembraunce of eternall tormētes & moost sorowful vyces are to lyght to breke it. ¶ O dulnesse insanable & vnable to be heled all this sharpe braydes are not suffycyent to quycken ẏ/ they are all to blunt for ẏ. ¶ Alas sythen ẏ great paynes ẏ god hath ordeyned for syñe/ are to lytel to put ẏ in fere and make ẏ to be dylygent for thy saluacyon. ¶ A god mercy/ a deedly dulnesse ẏ is in me sythen ẏ terryble thondre of my synnes & goostly syght of ẏ great abhomynable multytude of paynes causeth no quyckenes of deuocyō/ no mysery of teres/ no fere of god is in me. ¶ A woo maye I be whiche fele myselfe in this greate myserye/ not redy to aryse/ but rather desyred to fall deper. I am worse than a stone/ for it is descended of nature for to descēde/ but I descende by malyce agaynst nature. ¶ A dere lorde I loue more erthly vanyte than I do ẏ or ẏ place of my glorye/ my soule is croked al downe to the erthe/ for there the loue is there it is fyxed/ & not vpō ẏ/ & therfor it loketh not vp to ẏ/ here is mater of myserye in me to exyte an hondreth soules to sorow & make them cōtynue vneasely in wepyg/ but my soule is so dryed fro all moysture & grace ẏ ther cometh no teres fro me/ & thus I may se myself a drye stocke/ a leer tree redy to fyre. A merueylous god how am I comē to this dulnesse/ to this drynesse/ to this blyndnesse & derknesse of my soule/ my soule is made bynōme & impotent to all ꝑfyte dedes of vertue/ & onely it wāteth wyll/ but in maner it wāteth power to do well/ and what hath made me this feblenesse but onely syñe and what hath made in me suche synne but onely a croked and frowarde wyll. A wretched dysposycyon of my soule of the whiche I am

cause myselfe/and therfore myne Impotency and
indispolycyon to holy and perfyte lyuynge is none
excuse to me/for this myselfe hath made me by longe
custome in lyuynge. ¶ A good lorde an vnkynde soule
am I to the. I can not dyllymuie to the/for nothynge
I may withdrawe from the syght of the/of a chylde
thou hast gyuen me power to lyue vertuously and to
please the not for thyne auayle but for myne auayle/
receyued of the/thou hast called me/and yet thou con-
tynuest it by good thoughtes/by good counseyle/by
holy prechynges/by vertuous examples/by greate
gyftes/callynge to me for to come to the. And I as a
Wretche repell the/and al the gyftes that thou gyuest
me I abuse to the dyspleasure of the/and to the great
accusacyon and without thy mercy to the greate
dampnacyō of me/I delyre sodeyne sorowes and pay
nes to come vpon me there thou hast giuen to me this
respyte and tyme of greate delyberacyon to auoyde
the paynfull doungeon of hell and to come to the Joy-
full Empyre of thy glorye/there euerlastyngely for to
dwell with the/I attende it not/Wherfore I deserue
hastely for to be cast downe by the paynfull blastes of
the greate horryble tempestes of deth/I knowe well
that I maye not here alway abyde/& yet my mynde/
and my loue is more here than there that I muste al-
way abyde. ¶ A merueylous god a great blyndnesse
is in me that I sholde desyre for to abyde in the same
place of mysery there as I well knowe that I maye
not abyde than for to be in the place of blysse and of
myth and greate felycyte there as I may come yf I
wyll and for euer abyde/god hathe made me a reaso-

nable creature for to chose the beste lyfe / and I make myself an vnreasonable creature for to chose ỹ worste lyfe / and I loue that I sholde not loue / & I hate that I sholde loue / and thus bothe my mynde and my wyll I abuse vnto my great hurte which thou hast gyuen me to myne helpe / yf I sholde complayne vpon myselfe all that I can reduce to my mynde of myne owne wretchednesse and vnkyndnesse to god / remembryng the greate benefeytes and gyftes that I haue receyued of hym / and how gentyl a lorde he hath ben to me without my deseruynge / certaynly all the wretchednesse and dyscommendacyon that I can saye of myselfe is to lytell / in regarde of the greate dyscommendacyon and blame whiche I haue deserued / my wretched dyspolycyon is more redy to do euyll than my memorye and many mo yf they were knytte togyder with me are able to receyue / I fele myselfe full of wretchednesse. I am pryone and redy vnto all euyll / and dulle and slow to all goodnesse. A sythen I myght here or se my defautes shewed afore me lyke as they be I sholde abhorre with myselfe lyke as with a toode or a serpent. A what drede sholde my herte enbrace of that terryble Judgement whiche must be gyuen of myselfe at the houre of deth where the moost ryghtwyse Judge hymselfe shall accuse me / & myne owne conscyẽce shal wytnesse agaynst me how I haue mysvsed my soule and lytel heded the valoure therof whiche was bought with the precyous bloode of Chryste very god and man creatour and maker of the vnyuersal worlde / lorde of heuen and erth / to whose name all creatures shall do obedyence. I shall gyue accomptes how I haue abused my mynde / my wyll / my body / &

al my fyue wittes/my tongue/my beaute/my helth/
my strength/connyng/vertue/how I haue myslorded
myselfe my soule and body/the cuyll mocyons bothe
of soule and body/how I haue not done that was in
me to repressse them/but rather to kepe them and to
werke them. All these good lorde I forgete/and of all
these I shall gyue a strayte accomptes. Also of meate
and drynke/golde/syluer/and clothes/and of all these
whiche had ben vnder my tuycyō/as chyldren seruā-
tes/and of the euyll dedes that I haue done/and of all
the good dedes whiche I myght haue done/and for
slouthe & sluggysshenes of my selfe I haue lefte them
vndone of all ỳ tyme ỳ I haue receyued sythen I had
vse of reason. ¶ Adere lorde what shal I do at the dre-
detull houre of rekenynge where as shall be shewed
ryghtwysnesse without grace/yf I nowe laboure not
for grace. ¶ O what shall I do dyre tre that I am &
bryngе forth no good fruyte in the chyrche of god/but
rather sowed fruyte by many euyl wordes/euyl wer-
kes/euyll examples. I am an vnprofytable tree apte
and worthy to be cast in to endlesse fyre. ¶ A what shal
I do that day whan I shal gyue acompte of the tyme
gyuen to me of our lorde howe I haue spente it to the
honoure of hym. I may saye nothynge is myne owne
for I must gyue a strayte rekenyge of all that I haue
I am but as a bayly and mynyster vnder god and ta-
ken charge well to spende his goodes/dere lorde gyue
me grace amonge all tempozall myrth ofte to remem-
bre ỳ bytternesse of ỳ dredefull accompte/ỳ I maye ỳ
day receyue ỳ kyngedome of endelesse ioy and mercy.

¶ Odet animam meam vite mee. ¶ Adere lorde
seynge the myspendynge of my lyfe I am we-

ry of my lyfe. I myselfe am greuous to myselfe/ my burthen is great & is lyght to my body/ but it is heuy to my soule/ it is so greate ỹ it is lyke to presse me downe from heuen vnto the pytte of helle/ excepte specyall grace & helpe of my sauyour. O my mercyfull lorde sende me teeres that I maye lament daye and nyght my myserable lyfe/ and wasshe awaye the fylthe of so longe gaderynge of my soule/ I am woo whan I remembre so longe as I haue ben in this lyfe and so wretched/ and my wretchednes dayely greueth me/ my mynde is all occupyed in vanytees/ and my wyll in frowardnesse/ my mouthe in shrewednes/ my body in ydelnesse/ and my werkes in wretchednes. A who shall gyue to myne eyen a well of teeres/ that I maye cõtynually wepe and wayle my wokful lyfe/ my negligent lyfe/ my vnwyse & folysshe lyfe. I lyue not as a reasonable creature ought to lyue/ reformyng my soule and body and my werkes to my lorde whiche hath ordeyned me in this lyfe that by my werkes wel ordered to hym I shold come to his lyfe whiche lyfe onely ought to be called very lyfe/ for that onely is lyfe whiche can not be ended by deth/ and not ỹ lyfe where we dayly renne to deth/ and that lyfe onely is helth whiche can not be broken with sycknesse/ and that onely is Joye whiche can not be interrupted with sorowe and ỹ onely is perfyte blysse which can not be medled with mysery of payne or syñe. O ỹ blynd asse why openest ỹ not thyne eyen for to se ỹ differẽce betwyxte lyfe & deth/ vertue & vices/ sycknesse & helth/ felycite & mysery/ laboure ỹ wretche for to ayse whiche lyest

ouercharged with olde synnes / putte feete to feere /
Weppynge to weppynge / excepte thou applyest thyselfe
wylfully to sorowe / the ryght wysnesse of god shal ma
gre thyne heed bryngethe to sorowe. I chose than the
lesse sorowe to auoyde the more sorowe / the tempozall
sorowe to auoyde the eternal sorowe. Remembrest not
thou that he shall Judge the whome thou hast made
by many folde offences thyne aduersarye / to whome
thou hast done despyte and rebuke brekynge his com-
maundement afore his owne face. ¶ A god mercy I
ought to be sory in remembrynge his kyndnesse to me
and myne Jngratytude and vnkyndnesse to hym / and
the more kyndnesse he sheweth to me the more kynde
I ought for to be to hym / and more I am bounde by
the lawe of kyndnesse for to please hym / and the more
my synne is. yf I displease hym a woo ought I than
to be / for lyke as kyndnesse is dayly more & more / for
the lenger that he spareth me / the more kyndnesse he
sheweth vnto me / so by the circumstaunce of vnkynd-
nesse / the more greuous is the synne in me / What shal
I saye to this Judge sythen that onely myne owne
kyndnesse is able to conuycte me whiche so oftentyp-
mes calleth me for to amende my lyfe. Jnwarde in-
spyracyon & many a thought the whiche he putteth
in my mynde contrarye vnto myne owne wretched
dyspolycyō. And outwarde he calleth me by prechyn-
ge / and by moche good counselynge by redynge / by
example gyuynge of suche whiche hath lesse wytte
than I / lesse power to good werkes thā I / god hath
gyuen to me more precyous gyftes and helpe to do
well / and yet I do worse or not so wel / am not I than
worthy afore that ryghtwyse Judge to haue greate

punyſshement/he that is nowe mooſt pacyent to me
yf I amend not my lyfe/ſhall be mooſt felle and angry
with me. ¶And he whiche nowe is mooſt lyberall to
me/than ſhall be mooſt harde to me/and he whiche
now is mooſt meke to me/than ſhall be mooſt felleſt/
now mooſt mercyful/than mooſt rygorous and ſtray=
te in Judgement/I maye not flee this Judgement/
alwaye I am and ſhall be vnder his hande. Nowe I
am vnder the ryght hande of mercy/than ſhall I be
vnder the heuy hande of his ryghtwyſeneſſe/Woo is
me/Woo is me/whome I haue offended/whome I
haue not attended/whome I haue prouoketh to be
wrothe with me. ¶Alas wretche what haue I done.
I haue dyſhonoured my lorde god. I haue prouoked
almighty god to take vengeaunce on me/yf his hande
of mercy had not retеyned the ſwerde of vengeaunce
I ſholde haue peryſshed longe afore this/for many
tymes I haue deſerued dampnacyon/but vnto this
tyme he hath deferred the ſentence/and euer abydeth
whan I amende and come to reconſylyacyon. ¶O
wretched ſynner/why remembre not I of this lyfe
that vncertayne is/and for the tyme of this lyfe the
great kyndneſſe in god and gratytude/and howe after
this lyfe none ſhall be taken to grace whiche wyll not
amende in this tyme and ſpace. I byleue as I were
immortall. I fere not what ſhall falle/and myne olde
lyfe & cuſtomes hath ſo tyed me that without ſpecyal
helpe of my lord god I can not loſe me. Helpe me good
lorde from theſe daungers of indygnacyon & wrathe
of theſe I am benōmē/my power is nought without
ſupportacyon and helpe of thy mercy. ¶A what an=
guyſſhe ſhall be in me yf I do ſo vnhappely guyde

me to se the terryble day where he whiche hath moost loued me/ and moost done and moost suffred for me shall accuse me/ where he shall laye his woundes agaynst me/ his crosse/ his spere/ his crowne of thorne shall testyfye agaynst me/ my good aungell whiche hath so holsomly at many tymes coũseyled me/ and I haue repelled and lytell set by his counseyl/ this he shal wytnesse agaynst me/ the deuylles whiche haue tempted me to synne/ there shall accuse me/ and there reherse the wordes of my professyon/ there shall he shewe openly all my synnes in what thynge that I haue synned/ in what place and tyme/ and how I dyd synne/ & what thynge/ not onely ẏ I haue done euyll but what good werkes that I haue lefte vndone whiche I ought to haue. Al ẏ creatures of god of whom I haue receyued ony benefyte or ꝓfyte shall accuse me/ for they haue serued me bycause I sholde serue god/ and that I haue deceyued them and done that was in me to robbe them for theyr labours/ the heuen/ the erthe/ the sonne/ what mynde of man sholde not drede this terryble Judgement/ who sholde not drede the presence of the eternall Judge/ where all synnes shall be brought clerely in our syght/ & those thynges whiche we dyd with greate delectacyon shall be layde afore vs to our great sorow/ confusyon and detestacyõ. The Judge shall be aboue vs whose handes we shall not escape/ the helle vnder vs and the fendes redy to drawe vs thyder/ the Judge angred without forth/ the conscyence bytynge & tourmentynge withinforth/ and sythen the ryghtwyse man scarsely shal be saued/ the wretched synner so vmbelapped w̃ wretchednes where shall he become whome feere of dampnacyõ

and remorse of conscyence shall shake/and make hym to cry for woo. A woo may I than be whiche haue so many maters in me to bryng me to woo/it shall be Impossyble that day to hyde me/and it shall be to terryble and ferefull ỹ daye to shewe me/and nedes I muste appere/and by myselfe without ony procuratour/and answere for all that I haue done here/ and not onely for myne owne dedes but for all perteynynge to my cure & iurysdyccyon/where ony defaute hath ben there I ought to haue holpe. ¶ O how shall I answere for mani which am not able to answere for myselfe. O my charge is great/my remembraunce is lytell/my harmes do multyplye/and I seke no helpe. I renne to deth al vndysposed/my mynde is not with me. I am not with my selfe. I seke more for your aduauntage than for myselfe/my burden I shall onely bere for my selfe. Now myght I make it lyghter/but I enlarge it and make it heuyer my selfe/but nowe aryse thou synner/and se howe woo is thy sauyoure Chryste Jesu/he is called the lambe of god by whom thou arte redemed/his merytes are suffyciẽt though thy synes be neuer so greuous/cal for helpe and thou shalt not be shent/leue thy synnes and chaunge thyne entente/and purpose to do wel/chaũge false pleasures in to paynfull/solace in to sorow/loke vp and despeyre not/for thou shalte haue helpe ynough/trust on hym whome thou dredest/leue thy synne and flee to hym/& thou shalte haue socoure in all thy nedes/renne agayne to hym vnto whom ỹ hast offended moost greuously/& of his great mercy he may & wyl of all other helpe ỹ moost redyly/& meke confessyon excludeth desperacyõ/for there shall none be dãned but onely for syne

nes not truly confessed. I meane of suche whiche as haue receyued the baptysme of Chryste. A Jesu for thy holy name is as moche to say by Interpretacyon as the sauyour of synners/by his medyacyon Jesu that holy name be veryfyed of ỹ in sauynge of a great synner/whiche haue ben by presumptuous wyl dysobedyent vnto Jesu/ forgete my pryde and ordeyne it not to dethe/but washe my soule from synne with those stremes of the bloode whiche ranne from the fountayne of thy right syde. Now behold swete Jesu with thyne eyen of pyte these synners whiche calleth that swete name that comfortable name of the/the name to synners of mooste delectacyon/ỹ name of blessed hope/the name of saluacyon and conuersacyō/ What is Jesu but our sauyoure and redemptour/wherfore Jesus for thy bytter passyō be to mē Jesus/thou hast made me/nowe saue me/thou haste redemed me from dampnacyon/ nowe delyuer me than of thy goodnesse and nowe suffre not me to perysshe for my wretchednes/suffre not wretchednes to lese in me that thyne infynyte goodnesse that thou hast gyuen to me/take to the good lorde ỹ whiche is thyne and remeue from wretchednesse/for that is myne. ¶ Now Jesu/ Jesu haue mercy vpō me this tyme/of mercyfulnesse that I maye escape the terryble Judgement in the tyme of ryghtwysnesse/take me good lorde in to thy large bosom of mercy/it shall not be lesse good lorde/ for the more thou receyuest the more it is/than thy mercy is large ynough What soeuer we do amysse/and we calle hertely/this bosom is than redy. Admytte vs mooste louely Jesu amonge the nombre of thyne electe chyldren that with them we maye euerlastyngly laude

the/and our profyte fruycyon and glorye in the amonge al those whiche loue thy name Jesu/to whome be honour and glorye by infynyte duracyon of eternyte.

A M E N

Here endeth a lamentable complaynt that the soule maketh of the wretched lyfe of the body. Imprynted at London in Fletestrete at the sygne of the Sonne/by me Wynkyn de Worde. In the yere of our lorde. M.CCCCC. and.xxxij.